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## THE CAESURA IN LATIN HEXAMETER POETRY CENSEO EGO CAESURAM ISTAM DELENDAM ESSE

In May last Miss Dorothy Whitman, of the Centenary Collegiate Institute, Hackettstown, New Jersey, wrote me a letter which I count among the very best of the hundreds of letters that have come to me in the seventeen years and more of my editorial connection with *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY*. The answering of these letters—and I answer them all, even such foolish letters as that of the person who asked me to explain how I taught the “dative of reverence”—has been an enormous task. I may remark, in passing, that in the future I shall decline to devote much of my time to answering such questions. Nor will it be necessary. The General Index to *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY*, Volumes I-XVI, supplemented by the special Index to Volume XVII, and by similar Indexes to later volumes, will give overwhelmingly abundant answers to the well-meaning souls who expect, naively, a busy man to construct for them a bibliography on such topics as the Teaching of the Classics, The Value of Latin, The Influence of the Latin Language (*sic!*) on Modern Education, etc., etc. Seekers after such knowledge may well be expected to do something to help themselves, via the Indexes referred to above, especially since in many a place now complete files of *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* are available, and back numbers and volumes of *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* can be obtained at reasonable prices.

But let us return to Miss Whitman. I give the pertinent parts of her most thoughtful letter:

<I shall be most grateful if you will> settle for me two or three technicalities in the teaching of Latin to High School pupils, which I have been unable, myself, to clear up. It is partly a mere matter of *form* as accepted by the <College Entrance Examination> Board markers. . . . Other questions are on scansion in itself. . . .

I have always taught scanning as I myself was taught, e. g.

sēd quid e|go hāec au|tē nē|qui|quam in|grāta  
re|vōlvō

You will see that

(a) I have marked syllables long whether they were long by nature or by position;

(b) I have marked only the quantity of the *second* vowel (or rather syllable) in an elision;

(c) I have not marked the metrical accents.

Now, I beg to put the following questions.

(1) Do you know whether the Board expects the accents to be marked?

(2) Have you any comments to make on the above metrical scheme or any objections to urge against it?

(3) The question that comes up most persistently in my class-room and which I can answer least satisfactorily to my pupils is this: “May a caesura be in the middle of an elision?”

I have asked every one possible about this for two

years, and most professors and teachers advise me “No”.

But, Mr. C. W. Gleason, in his *Gate to Vergil* (Ginn and Company, 1888), scans Aeneid I entire. I counted forty-five or fifty instances in which he places the caesura in the elision. In the great majority of these instances the caesura comes before *et*, *alque*, *aut*, or other conjunctions where the pause (or at least the break in the sense) comes naturally BEFORE the conjunction; in these instances, it would, to put the matter mildly, be absurd to set the caesura AFTER *et*, etc.

Take such a line as Aeneid 1.35:

Vela dabant laeti et spumas salis aere ruebant

Where can the caesura be set—if it is to be set at all in the verse—save after *laeti*?

Take also such examples as Aeneid 1.117, 542:

torquet agens circum et rapidus vorat aequore vortex  
si genus humanum et mortalia temnit arma

In these verses I hardly understand how the *sense* can be logically split save after *circum* and after *humanum*, and yet I do not see how to *pronounce* the verses if the caesura is set after *circum* and after *humanum*. A number of verses about which questions were asked on recent examination papers of the College Entrance Examination Board presented to pupils—and to me—exactly this problem, and I have not known what to tell my class, but have promised to find out, if possible.

(4) Does the following verse, from the 1919 June Cp. 4 Examination, contain a bucolic diaeresis after *ebur*? My class and I scanned the verse as follows:

et māes|tum in|lacru|māt tem|plis ebur|aeraque|  
sūdant

(5) Is this verse (Cp. 4, September 1919) correctly scanned?

bis cāp|ti Phryges|ēt mōr|ti prae|tendere|mūrōs

Also this (Cp. 4, 1916):

Pandarus,||ūt fū|sō gēr|manūm|cōrpo|re cernit

In these last two verses does one call the pause merely diaeresis, and in (4) above does he call it bucolic diaeresis?

(6) It seems hard to put any caesura at all into some verses which students who took the Board examinations have been asked to scan, marking the caesura. Compare e. g. September, 1917.

strāv|scūtō|rūmque in|cēdi|victor a|cervōs

Except for an apparent pause after *stravi*, there is no place for a pause in the verse. It is difficult, in fact impossible, to break the last five feet, anywhere. . . .

Various other points come up with questions to which I do not always find the answer, but the above, particularly (1) and (2) are the most troublesome.

The pertinent parts of my reply to Miss Whitman ran as follows:

I do not know at all what the practice of the Readers of the College Entrance Examination Board is with respect to the marking of the answers to the questions about scansion. I am sending a copy of your letter, *in toto*, and of my reply, to Professor Nelson Glenn McCrea, of Columbia University, who is Chairman of the Board of Latin Readers.

You say you have always taught scansion as you yourself were taught. You make three points here: (a) you mark syllables long, whether they are long by nature or by position; (b) you mark only the quantity of [the] second vowel, or second syllable, involved in an elision; (c) you do not mark the metrical accents.

(a) I take up these matters in reverse order, and so begin by saying that I should mark the metrical accents. They are of prime importance.

(b) I wish I could persuade you, and every other teacher who deals with Latin verse to stop talking about *long syllables* and *short syllables*. But here I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. I discussed this subject in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 4.83-84, III, 11.89. You might refer also to my edition of the Aeneid, Introduction, page 74, footnote. In THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 11.89, I called attention to a discussion of this subject, by Professor E. D. Wright, in THE Classical Journal 11.367.

I need only point out further that your marking of the first *o* in *revolve* as long violates the truth. That *o* is short.

However, in marking in this way, you are sinning only as very great scholars, in this country and abroad, have sinned in their most scholarly discussions of matters of scansion. See again THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 4.84, 11.89.

For practical purposes, I suspect that you are justified in asking your students to mark only the quantity of the second vowel, or the 'heaviness' or the 'lightness' of the second syllable involved in the elision.

I myself, however, should mark both vowels of both syllables. It is rather instructive to discover to what extent long vowels, for example, are elided.

#### THE CAESURA

Your second question has to do with caesura. Now a lot of trouble comes here because the term caesura has been used, in Grammars and in editions of Vergil and Ovid, in two separate and distinct senses.

In one sense, the term caesura merely implies the *ending of a word within a foot*. In this interpretation of the term caesura, it is plain that it is perfectly possible to have six caesuras in a hexameter verse. It would be a very good thing indeed if this use of the term caesura, at least, were absolutely discarded, and forgotten as if it never had existed at all.

Secondly, whether people understood what they were doing or not, they were also using the term caesura to denote a *break in a verse which corresponded more or less closely to a break in sense*—or, in other words, the kind of pause one would make naturally if one were reading intelligently the verse aloud. On this particular point I wrote something in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 10.98, and 12.29-30.

In answer to your third question, May a caesura be in the middle of an elision? I should say, without hesitation, *Yes*. It happens that in October last a teacher wrote me about Aeneid 4.93 *Egregiam vero laudem et spolia ampla refertis*. She wanted (it seemed) to put the caesura AFTER *laudem et*!! I answered most emphatically that that was wrong. I pointed out that *et* belonged in sense to the following word, not with *laudem*.

Now I assume that even a poet wants to be understood. If that is right, if a poet really wants to be understood, and if we, in reading poetry, want other people to understand it, why should we divide—and division is all that caesura really is—in defiance of sense, AFTER *et* in this verse. This teacher asked me also about the *ecthipsis*, if the caesura was put after *laudem*. I said to her, "Forget about the *ecthipsis*". I regard it as a crime to mention matters of that sort to students in the Preparatory Schools.

The same teacher asked me about Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3.134 *tot natos natasque et, pignora cara,*

*nepotes*, and 3.109 *mox umeri pectusque onerataque brachia telis*. She wanted to put the caesura BETWEEN *natas* and *que* in the one verse, and between *pectus* and *que* in the other. I said that it would be absurd, in my judgment, to divide in these verses BEFORE *que*.

I went on to write to her as follows:

"Your trouble comes because you have been thinking wrongly about caesura. You have in your thoughts made it a purely mechanical thing, and, in your reading of Latin verse, you have made what is, in my judgment, another very serious error. You have evidently read such things as *multum ille et terris as multilleterris*. That is sacrilege".

I am sorry that "most professors and teachers", according to your statement, have advised you contrary to the advice I am giving you above—namely, have urged you *not* to put caesura in the middle of an elision. I have already met such advice by what I said about the misreading of *multum ille et terris*. But let us continue the discussion. Look, for instance, at Horace, *Carm.* 2.6. 1-2: *Septimi, Gades aditure mecum et Cantabrum, inductum iuga ferre nostra, et barbaras Syrtis*. . . Each of those lines ends in *et* and there is elision in each verse before *et*. It would be absurd to disregard the sense and jam together the elided vowel and the word *et*, and then—horror of horrors—stop at the end of each of these verses. By every consideration of common-sense a pause is demanded in verse 2 *before* and *after* the phrase *inductum ferre iuga nostra*. And there is elision, too, *before* this weighty phrase. In Aeneid 1.35 put the caesura after *laeti*. In the other two lines you quoted, the one beginning with *torquet agens* and the other beginning with *Si genus*, put the caesura after *circum*, and after *humanum*.

Now I think I can help you, ultimately, to get rid of your final difficulty—namely, how to pronounce the line if you put the caesura in the middle of the elision.

Here the first thing to do is to stop eliding in the ordinary sense of the word. Imitate more or less what we do in English when we have in verse such a combination as *the eternal*. Nobody would pronounce that as if it were a single word *theternal*. If we will not do that with our own language, why should we suppose that the Romans read *multilleterris* as one single word, without regard to sense, or to the pauses required by considerations of rhetoric (logic)?

Now I have no doubt that you will rebel at first at my suggestion. But—I know that students who had long been trained in the other scheme have, after they had read aloud a good part of Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, or a good part of the Aeneid, in the manner suggested above, found it entirely possible to forget their old method of doing things, and to read Latin verse in my fashion and read it extremely well.

I would suggest one practical thing further. In reading such a line as Aeneid 1.3, make a little pause after *multum ille*. So in reading Aeneid 1.5, make a pause after *quoque*. Here you will be killing two birds with one stone. (1) You will be getting rid of your difficulty about the caesura, and (2) you will be obeying the laws of rhetoric, or, in other words, of proper delivery, orally and vocally, of the line. Just try it for a while. So, at 1.35, just experiment a few times and see the fine effects you get by reading as follows: *vela dabant* <pause> *laeti* <pause>. Then in the next line pause after *Iuno*.

Just one final thing in this connection. Recall the fundamental principles of dactylic hexameter. In reading dactylic hexameter you must bring out six metrical accents. If you bring out the metrical accent, unhesitatingly regarding ictus as stress (it can't be made anything else in the world, no matter how one may try to delude himself), you will come out all right.



I may say in this connection that I do not claim at all any *ancient* warranty for my handling of elision. I do what I do because I think it is the common-sense way of handling the situation, NOW. I do not know *exactly* what the ancients did. In any case, we are not the ancients. At least our Preparatory School students are not.

Now, in conclusion, I will answer the final questions (4-6) of your letter. There is a bucolic diaeresis after *ebur*. But I should myself never mention bucolic diaeresis to my students. What is the good of it? There are far more important things for them to deal with.

You have correctly scanned the other two lines. If you insist on using the term diaeresis at all, I suppose you would have to call the diaeresis in these two lines plain diaeresis, and that in the other bucolic diaeresis.

If there is any such thing as caesura in the line commencing *stravi*, the caesura would come after. The situation you have here would be met best, so far as I am concerned, by what I wrote in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 10.98 (I have in mind the reference to Longfellow's Evangeline). I suspect that if you were reading along, verse after verse, and reached in the Latin such a verse as this beginning with *stravi*, you would find that you had stopped, *unconsciously*, as the result of long practice, after *sculorumque*. One very speedily gets into the habit, subconsciously, of stopping in the middle of a hexameter line. Someone said once a very good thing about a hexameter line—that, in reading it, you were like a person who is climbing a hill and who, when he reaches the top, stops to take a breath (perhaps also to look at the scenery) before he plunges down the hill on the other side, or walks sedately down its slope. A caesura, rightly considered, is this pause at the top.

I want to refer you to an article by Professor Samuel E. Bassett, of the University of Vermont, entitled Theory of the Homeric Caesura According to the Extant Remains of the Ancient Doctrine. This was printed in the American Journal of Philology, 40 (1919), 343-372. You will find it pretty hard reading, but, if you master it, you will learn a lot.

The reading of that article crystalized in my mind a whole lot of feelings which I had had about caesura for many, many years. Some day, when I can find the time and strength, I shall start a crusade against any use whatsoever in our class-rooms of the term caesura.

To this letter of mine Miss Whitman made prompt and full reply. This, by the way, in itself was worthy of notice. In the past seventeen years many of those who have taken of my time and strength have sent me no word of thanks or even of acknowledgment. One other group—very large—consists of those who "thank me in advance" for my kindness! Both groups, of course, have failed to enclose a stamp for reply.

I give the more important parts of Miss Whitman's reply:

May I take your time to discuss your letter in part? I am not asking any further questions, or expecting any answer whatsoever, but merely felt interested to reply to some of the points you make.

First, as to the elision at the caesura, I am much relieved that you advocate it, for it has always seemed to me the *only* reasonable arrangement, inasmuch as I do assume that poets wish to be understood. The professors who advised me against it . . . disconcerted me greatly by their advice.

Now as to the terminology of 'long' and 'short' syllables. I dislike it myself and always have, though I have always tried to clarify the point to my classes, by showing them that even in English it takes *longer* to pronounce *tend* than *ten*, *hemp* than *hem*, etc., though in each case the *e* remains *short* as a *vowel* although the

one-syllable word *lengthens*. They have never made any difficulty over it, although none the less I have rebelled in my own mind at marking for instance *interesse* with two long marks! So I adopted a system, entirely my own, as I thought, of marking as *long* only syllables which were long by nature because they contain a long vowel, and *underlining* syllables 'long' by 'position'. Consequently, I am greatly interested to find, in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 11.89, that my device was only that of Professor Wright and yourself, and I was glad to find such authority for doing what I had heard of from no other teacher. Of course, nothing in my letter of May 10 would have led you to suspect my feelings on the subject, for, after making sure by much practice that my pupils really do differentiate the two types of 'heavy' syllables, I always tell them thereafter to set the macron above the line for both types and thus conform to the conventional usage. . . .

May I add a word of explanation, though perhaps hardly of justification, of my not having adopted the terms which, in point of fact, I myself prefer? You see my Vergil class consists largely of girls whom I have in the previous year trained for the College Entrance Examination Board Examination Number 1, which contains always the following question: "Divide the following words into their syllables, mark the quantity of the penult, and indicate the accent". As these girls use the Allen and Greenough Latin Grammar with its "long" and "short" syllables (§§ 7-12), I have simply allowed them to continue their original phraseology when they meet their Vergil scanning, rather than teach them new terms for the same thing. I suspect, however, that you have made a convert in me and that another year I may carry the 'heavy' and 'light' idea back into the Cicero work, as a preliminary for encountering Vergil. By the way, it was not until four years ago that I met with and adopted your Vergil, so that in my previous years of teaching I had *only* the conventional phrase to go by, and even at that, I did not like it.

My defence for teaching such terms as diaeresis, etc., must be that, with 75% of my students taking the College Entrance Examination Board Examinations, I must include terms that may possibly be asked for, however little I wish to; and that, as surely as I leave such terms out, so surely do my pupils get caught. For instance, in the first year that I omitted synizesis and syllaba anceps, my pupils lost points on a question! Since your pupils are already in College, you can teach them more valuable things. I shall be only too thankful if it ever becomes possible for me to omit various tricky details which are of little value, and to put more time on the literary end. But five points lost through failure to scan a line correctly may mean passing or failing, College or loss of it, to some pupils, absurd as it seems; and sometimes a student who would make a fine and able member of a College may lose through technicalities in some one subject which is hard for her.

I must not trespass on your time further except to say that I am absorbing with interest and *not* with rebellion as you suggest, your explanations of caesura. . . .

I have quoted so extensively from Miss Whitman's two letters because what she says will, I am sure, find an echo in many other teachers's souls.

When matters had reached this point, I wrote to Professor Bassett, sending him a copy of all the correspondence, and urgently invited him to rewrite, from the point of view of THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY, his article on the caesura, in the American Journal of Philology, referred to above. The result is embodied in the article which immediately follows this, in the current number of THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY.

CHARLES KNAPP

THE CAESURA—A MODERN CHIMAERA<sup>1</sup>

The first reading of the Aeneid ought to be a great adventure in poetry. The "stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man" ought to take possession of the student's mind; the "ocean roar of rhythm" should fill his ears. But the boy or the girl who enters for the first time this wonderful foreign land of verse finds at the start a 'lion in the way'. This monster proves to be worse than a lion; it is a Chimaera, 'its head a lion, its tail a serpent, between these a she-goat'. This fantastic creature is called *caesura*; it will mar the pleasure of the journey into the beautiful realm of classical hexameter poetry unless one recognizes that it is only a creation of the mind, and that, at least in the form in which the doctrine is usually taught, it never existed. The object of the present paper is to place some of the evidence for the chimaerical nature of *caesura*, as taught to-day, before the teachers of Vergil, and especially before the examiners who put on their papers the words "Mark the *caesura*".

Some years ago the writer spent many months in trying to find out how the theory of *caesura* began and what the ancients meant by the term. The quest led into the dreary and barren desert lands of the Greek and the Roman grammarians. The results of the study were published in an article entitled *Theory of the Homeric Caesura* According to the Extant Remains of the Ancient Grammarians, in the *American Journal of Philology* 40 (1919), 343-372, where may be found the references to the ancient passages which form the basis of the conclusions which will be presented briefly here. The writer began the investigation believing that (1) every verse must have a *caesura*; (2) the *caesura* must be found in the third or in the fourth foot, or at the end of the fourth foot; and (3) there was always at least a slight pause at the *caesura*. But his study led to a conclusion that was quite different; *caesura*, as it is generally taught to-day, was found to be a monstrous creature of the imagination, brought into being by the uninspired grammarians, and unknown to Homer and to Vergil. It was a Chimaera not only because it never existed, but also because it was an idea of triple meaning—three-headed, as it were—and the three meanings could not be united.

Before discussing these three meanings and the impossibility of uniting them, let us look at the inherent improbability that Vergil ever intended that a *pause* should be felt in the *third* or the *fourth* foot of every hexameter, by examining a few familiar verses of the Aeneid.

(1) *Caesura* in every verse?

Aen. 1. 92 Extemplo Aeneae solvuntur frigore membra.

Aen. 1. 124 Interea magno misceri murmure pontum. . . .

Aen. 1. 132 Tantane vos generis tenuit fiducia vestri?

<sup>1</sup>As is stated at the close of the preceding article, Professor Bassett returned, in this article, to the discussion of the *caesura* at my very urgent invitation. It seemed to me that his scholarly discussion of a matter which has long disturbed teachers ought to be made pedagogically available.

C. K.

No reader who was entirely unfamiliar with the theory of *caesura* would ever think of making any appreciable pause anywhere in these verses except at the end of each. It is only the doctrine of *caesura*, which has been foisted upon us without the knowledge or the consent of the poet, that makes us look for a pause after *magno* and *Aeneae* and *generis*. The syntactical relation of each of these words with one or more words towards the end of the verse rather unites the line than severs it into two distinct parts. And why must there be a *caesura* in every verse? The half dozen reasons that have been given, and which the writer has discussed in the article referred to above (pages 343-345), fail to convince.

(2) *Caesura* regularly in the third or in the fourth foot?

Aen. 1 180-188:

180 Aeneas scopulum interea conscendit | et omnem  
prospectum late pelago petit, | Anthea si quem  
iactatum vento videat | Phrygiasque biremis,  
aut Capyn, | aut celsis in puppibus arma Caii.  
Navem in conspectu nullam, | tris litora cervos

185 prospicit errantis; | hos tota armenta sequuntur  
a tergo, | et longum per vallis pascitur agmen.

Constitit hic; | arcumque manu celerisque sagittas  
corripuit, | fidus quae tela gerebat Achates.

Again let us forget for the moment that there is any such thing as *caesura*, and notice only those pauses which the sense requires as we read these nine verses. We find that only four—less than half—show the chief pause in sense at any one of the places where the ancients located the *caesura*, viz., bucolic diaeresis (181), hephthemimeral (182, 184), and penthemimeral (185). The chief pauses in sense in the other five verses are, respectively, feminine of the fifth foot (180), first diaeresis (183, 186), and masculine of the second foot (187, 188). None of these was recognized as the *caesura* in the ancient formulation of the theory. And one naturally queries why one should call the chief pause in sense by the name, *caesura*, and what is the use of marking it. Sometimes it may be necessary, for the full understanding of the meaning, to point out where the chief pause occurs, but this has to do with interpreting the thought alone. Who, for example, ever thought of requiring the student to mark the pauses in Caesar or in Cicero?

These illustrations, it is hoped, have aroused the suspicion in the reader's mind that there is something factitious—if not fictitious—in the present conception of *caesura*, and have made him ready to examine with the writer this three-headed curiosity as it is exhibited in the modern grammatical Zoo.

The *modern* theory of *caesura* is a little more than a century old (see pages 345-346 of the article referred to above); it includes three different and conflicting views of the meaning of *caesura*, as follows.

(1) *Caesura* is a pause or a hold, occurring in the third or possibly in the fourth foot, and marking the end of the first of two rhythmical phrases or *cola* into which the hexameter is supposed to be divided. This may be called *rhythmical caesura*. The doctrine of the *cola* belongs to music and hence to lyric poetry. In this

kind of poetry neither a pause in sense nor even a word-end is required to mark the end of a *colon*. Hence a few modern scholars have gone so far as to hold that the caesura of the hexameter may be found in the middle of a word.

(2) Caesura in general is the cutting of a foot by a word-end, but the caesura is where a word ends in the third or in the fourth foot. For reasons which will be given later this caesura may properly be called *metrical caesura*. Unless it occurs where the sense calls for a stop, there is no reason whatever for making caesura a pause, unless we hark back to the theory of the rhythmical caesura.

(3) Caesura is a pause in sense. This I call *logical caesura*. This is a very reasonable definition, but it leads to disquieting results. One of the chief pauses in sense is at the bucolic diaeresis, which is not caesura at all in that it does not cut a foot in two. Furthermore, if one will examine the first two feet of the verse of the Aeneid or of the Iliad, one will be surprised to find how often a pause in sense is found there, and yet few grammars and works on metric find the caesura here. Finally, as was queried above, what justification is there for calling these pauses caesurae, and what is the use of 'marking' them?

These three definitions, rhythmical, metrical, and logical, interfere with one another, and introduce uncertainty and confusion with regard to the nature of caesura and the reason for its importance. They prevent both teachers and taught from concentrating attention on the flow of the verse. They form that triple-headed monster which bars the path leading to the poetic beauties of the Iliad, the Odyssey, or the Aeneid. If the reader will now have the patience to join in hunting the monster to his lair in the dry desert of the ancient grammarians, that is, in tracing how the doctrine arose and how it was applied, perhaps he may be willing to throw overboard the whole doctrine of caesura as something of no use whatever in the elementary teaching of Vergil and Homer.

It is very important to notice, in the first place, that the doctrine grew up very late, in fact after Vergil composed the Aeneid. Aristotle does not mention it; no more do the Alexandrians. Varro was ignorant of it, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who lived about the time of Vergil, had occasion to mention it (if it existed), but does not do so. But by about 150 A. D. the doctrine was fully established. Four caesurae were recognized, but there was a difference of opinion which these four were. Some held that they were the feminine and the masculine of the third foot, the masculine of the fourth and the bucolic diaeresis. Others followed a theory that caesura must divide the verse into unlike, that is, into odd, parts; hence they rejected the bucolic diaeresis, and substituted for it, as the fourth caesura, the feminine of the fourth foot. This was unfortunate, for of all possible breaks in the hexameter the one after the first short syllable of the fourth foot is most carefully avoided by Homer; and as for Vergil, a Latin writer found so much difficulty in discovering an example of this caesura that he had to make one up: *Quae pax longa remisat arma | novare parabant*. This verse was

used by many of his successors to illustrate the 'forbidden' caesura. Thus confusion and unreason mark the doctrine from the earliest formulation of it that has come down to us.

Who was the originator of the doctrine? Undoubtedly he was a Greek, for a large part of the terminology is Greek, e. g. *penthemimeres*, *hephthemimeres*, *diaeresis*. I have suggested that Heliodorus was the man, for he lived at exactly the time when the doctrine seems to have been developed, that is, during the first century of our era; he was one of the most famous metricians of his time, and, above all, he was much interested in dividing verses into their respective *cola*. But, however uncertain we may be about the author of the theory, we can be sure from existing fragments of treatises that the theory itself grew up in the following way. A certain school of metricians derived all lyric verses from the hexameter. They noticed that in the hexameter a word always ended in the third or the fourth foot or at the end of the fourth foot. Now it happened that in Greek lyric poetry there were dactylic verses which exactly corresponded in form and length to the first part of the hexameter cut off by the word-ends just mentioned. These verses were the trimeter catalectic ending in one syllable ('penthemimeres'), or in two syllables ('third trochaic'); the tetrameter catalectic ending in one syllable ('hephthemimeres'), or in two syllables ('fourth trochaic'), and the tetrameter acatalectic ('tetrameter'). These were the *tomae* of the hexameter. *Tome* is the Greek word to which the Latin word *caesura* corresponds. It means either the thing cut off, or the cutting itself. At first the *tomae* were the parts of the hexameter cut off by the word-ends in the third or the fourth foot. They were thus neither places nor pauses, but segments of the verse. Thus the *penthemimeres tome*, which is translated into Latin by *caesura penthemimeris*, was originally a lyric verse of two and one-half dactylic feet which the Derivationist School found in the first half of the hexameter. For example, a Latin metrical writer illustrates this *caesura* (that is, *tome*, in its original sense of 'segment') by

quam Juno fertur,

and adds that by doubling this *caesura* the so-called pentameter is obtained:

quam Juno fertur, quam Juno fertur.

No other *tomae* of the hexameter than these four or five were recognized. There did not exist in lyric a short dactylic verse corresponding in length to the part of the hexameter cut off by what we call the triemimeral caesura, and hence this *tome* was not known. It was not till centuries after the doctrine of caesura was fully developed that we find a reference to this caesura, by Ausonius (fourth century A. D.), and he calls it 'the caesura after the first dactyl and a half-foot'.

The above seems to be the only possible explanation of the origin of the doctrine of caesura. If it is correct, then there is no reason whatsoever for making a pause at 'caesura'. Nor is there good reason for calling a pause in sense a 'caesura'. Most of the earlier treatises make a word-end all that is essential to caesura. It is true that in these treatises there is sometimes added



*et sensus completur.* But the verses chosen to illustrate the caesurae do not indicate that the sense is complete enough to warrant a pause. For example, a Latin treatise uses the verse,

quam Juno fertur terris magis omnibus unam,

to illustrate the penthemimeral, hephthemimeral, and bucolic 'caesurae', and in a Greek treatise a single verse of the *Iliad* (4.350) is used to show the four caesurae. Two treatises make the completion of the thought more pronounced at the bucolic diaeresis. It is quite possible that caesura as a pause in sense grew out of the earlier meaning of the term because some grammarian noticed how often there was a pause in the thought at the end of the fourth foot in Greek pastoral poetry. But there were at least two other influences which tended to bring about the transfer of meaning from caesura as a word-end to caesura as a pause in thought. Nicanor, called the Punctuator, studied the places in the verse of Homer's poems where marks of punctuation should be placed—and every one knows that these are frequently found at the four 'caesurae'. And Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his essay on Literary Composition, called attention to the great variety of places in the Homeric hexameter at which pauses in sense occur. So, rather late in the development of the doctrine, caesura came to be regarded by some grammarians as a pause in the sense and nothing else.

We have in one passage a very clear piece of evidence that no pause was made at a mere word-end caesura by the grammarians who adopted this definition of the term. The same passage is the best and one of the earliest references to what the phenomenon of caesura, that is, the cutting of a foot by a word-end, really is. It is found in the voluminous commentary on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* written by Eustathius, and is corroborated by a Latin grammarian, Marius Victorinus. Eustathius comments on *Iliad* 9.122 as follows:

The ancients <that is, the early grammarians—Eustathius wrote in the twelfth century> regarded the cutting of the verse into two ideas as not very metrical. They admired the verse in which there was conflict throughout between words and feet, like

Ἰλίδθεν με φέρον ἀνέμος Κικόρεσσι πέλασθεν

<where no foot ends with a word>. They disliked equally the verse in which each foot ended with the end of a word like

ἔβριος | εἵνεκα | τῆσδε σὺ | ἔσχεο, | πείθεο|δ' ἡμῖν,

and where the verse was divided into two or more distinct thoughts, like

ἐνθ' οὐτ' Ἰδομενεὺς τλῆ μῆναιεν, | οὐτ' Ἀγαμέμνων.

This latter kind of verse they said was rather *rhythmical* than *metrical*.

This can mean only that pauses were matters of rhythm, and that caesura, that is, the cutting of a foot by the end of a word, was not rhythmical—not a pause or a hold—but metrical, that is, a matter which concerns the meter or measuring of the language by the metrical feet.

The difference between rhythm and meter was much more clearly marked by the ancient grammarians than it is to-day. Rhythm was a matter of music and hence

of time-intervals. It could be marked by sounds of any kind—of a musical instrument, of the feet in marching and dancing, or of the voice in singing or reciting poetry. Meter had nothing to do with this. It concerned only the adjustment of the words to the metrical feet. In the hexameter there is one rigidly fixed formula or scheme of six feet, the first five of which must contain either one long and two short syllables or two long syllables; the sixth must contain two long syllables, or one long and one short syllable and a short pause. Now the obvious way to fit the words into this scheme would be to fill each foot with one word. But this would not only be exceedingly difficult, because of the nature of the language; it would also be unbearably monotonous. Hence arises the principle of opposition between words and metrical feet. This is one aspect of the eternal conflict between formula and nature, the problem offered by the need to adjust the many to the one. Art solves this problem by the beautiful adaptation of an infinite variety of matter to one underlying form. The phenomenon of caesura is nothing but the beautiful adjustment of the conflict between the language and the rigid scheme of six dactylic or spondaic feet. It is one of the chief reasons why the hexameter in the hands of a great poet like Homer or Vergil is never monotonous. There is another kind of variation which consists in changing the relative number of dactyls and spondees in each verse, and in arranging the two kinds of feet in different ways. Thirty-two variations are possible in the hexameter, and Homer uses them all with one possible exception, that is, six spondees in a verse. But a third variation is much more important. This grows out of the conflict, not between the words and the feet, but between the mechanical rhythmical scheme of six bars of 2/4 time, rendered with the precision of the drum-beat, and the modulation of this rhythm by the introduction of pauses or holds—what every good singer does in rendering a song, and what the poet does in reciting his own verses. This too the nature of spoken language requires: it would be difficult—and monotonous, likewise—to write every verse so that there should be no pause until the end, and a pause always at the end. Hence the pauses in sense are distributed through the verse. Here again the greatest poets, working more by genius than by rule, show the greatest variety. In Homer there are not more than three or four out of the possible seventeen ends of syllables in the verse, where a pause in the sense does not sometimes occur. These pauses *cut* the verse *rhythmically*, not *metrically*. You may call them caesurae if you will, but what is the use?

But perhaps we have not yet come to the *crux* of caesura. Some will doubtless ask whether we ought not to make some kind of a rhythmical pause always in the third or the fourth foot, even if the sense does not clearly demand it. We can only answer that a modulation in rhythm *without reference to the sense* is proper only for verse which was sung, at least so far as ancient doctrine which has been preserved gives authority for this modulation. There is no sound reason for supposing that the ancients, in reading Vergil or Homer,



ever made a pause which the thought did not require. The best that can be said for such a pause in the third or the fourth foot of every hexameter is that both Homer and Vergil so frequently do make a pause in sense there, that we come to expect it: our sense of rhythm, wrongly trained, too, by the traditional teaching of caesurae, makes us fail to detect the many subtle varieties of modulation for which Homer was famous among all poets.

This brings us to another point which perhaps lies at the root of the whole doctrine of caesura. Why are caesura and pause in sense so much more frequent in the third and the fourth feet, or at the end of the fourth, than elsewhere in the verse? If you will examine a hundred or more verses of the Aeneid or of the Iliad, you will find that the conflict between words and feet, and likewise the pauses in sense, are much more sought after by the poet here than in the other four feet. What is the reason for this? Why, for example, should not caesura and pause in sense occur at the end of the third foot? The answer is really quite simple. If a poet has only one kind of verse in which to write a poem of thousands of lines, he must use many devices to avoid monotony. The most important of these we have mentioned above. And yet at the same time the poet must take care that his verse shall always have the unmistakable swing of the hexameter. If he makes a pause anywhere within a foot, he thereby to some extent destroys the dactylic rhythm. An ancient rhetorician called attention to a verse like Aen. I 237, *pollicitus. | Quae te, genitor, sententia vertit*, saying that the pause in the second foot made the rest of the verse read like an anapaestic dimeter <with one extra syllable at the end>. So the masculine 'caesura' of the third foot leaves the so-called paroemiac verse, which is the last verse of the anapaestic system or stanza. If a pause in sense thus disturbs the regular rhythm, the poet must get back to the rhythm. Hence the popularity of the pause at the end of the fourth foot, even in Homer and the Aeneid. It is much the same in the case of mere 'caesurae', that of word-ends cutting the feet. The hexameter must always be felt as a single solidly-built verse. It must not show any tendency to break in two in the middle or near the middle. Hence the two-fold conflict, introduced between the schematic rhythm and the varied modulation on the one hand, and between the metrical feet and the phenomenon of caesura on the other, keeps both the rhythmical and the metrical sense of the reader in suspense, and therefore, as Professor Humphreys has observed, actually helps to bind the long verse into one. Eustathius, in the passage from which I quoted above, said much the same thing: 'The ancient grammarians liked to have the metrical feet *bound together* in such a way that no foot ended with a word'.

Let me repeat in the form of a summary the conclusions of this article.

(1) Caesura in modern times may be one of three things, (a) a rhythmical modulation or hold, without reference to the thought; (b) a word-end, occurring in the middle third of the hexameter, again with little or no reference to the thought; and (c) a pause in thought,

no matter where it occurs, but the pause which comes in the middle third of the verse is usually regarded as *the* caesura. In ancient times, beginning with about 100 A. D., the term came to have much the same meanings, except that rhythmical caesura, without regard to the thought, is not vouched for in connection with recitative poetry. The three definitions resulted in great confusion in both ancient and modern times.

(2) The doctrine of caesura arose in the time of the grammarians through the discovery that the end of a word in the two middle feet of Homer's hexameter cut off a section which was a lyric dactylic measure used by the Greek poets. In applying this discovery, some famous metrician, possibly Heliodorus, but at any rate some one who lived at about his time, the middle of the first century A. D., laid down a rule that caesura must occur in one of four places in the two middle feet of the verse. The metricians then began to look for word-ends at these places, and made caesura nothing but the occurrence of the end of a word in one of these four places. There was difference of opinion about the fourth caesura, some holding that it was the feminine of the fourth foot (the forbidden caesura in Homer and Vergil), and others the so-called bucolic diaeresis. But caesura in the strict sense never occurred elsewhere, according to all the treatises up to the time of Ausonius (fourth century A. D.),—the reason being, obviously, that there existed no shorter dactylic verses in lyric poetry which could be found before the end of a word in any foot before the third. The rhetorical study of Homer led to the observation that the pauses in sense coincided with the caesurae. Hence the term was extended by some grammarians to include a pause in sense, and in late treatises often meant nothing else.

(3) *There is no evidence that the ancients ever made a pause in the recited hexameter which was not required by the sense. And it is certain that caesura, regarded as the mere occurrence of a word-end in the middle third of the verse, was never marked by a pause.*

(4) *Therefore there is no reason for making a pause in the verse of Homer or Vergil anywhere that the sense does not require it. And there is quite as little reason for marking the pauses in sense, and calling them caesurae, in Vergil as there is in Cicero or in Caesar.*

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

SAMUEL E. BASSETT

#### THE NEW YORK CLASSICAL CLUB

Dr. Grant Showerman, of the University of Wisconsin, Director of the Summer School of Classical Studies at the American Academy in Rome, addressed The New York Classical Club at its first meeting of the year 1924-1925, November 6, on The Meaning of Rome. He traced America's connection with Europe through the English, the Norman-French, and the Romans, the influence of Rome especially showing itself through the Renaissance, the afterglow of which is still seen to-day. He stated that for sources of our modern life we should study our ancestry, that our cultural and spiritual ancestry is English, that we are Anglo-Saxon and Roman, that is, Anglo-Latin or Anglo-Roman. He added that Rome had been the laboratory of law for centuries and that Roman law had

touched all modern civilization; that the English language was rich because of its highly composite origin, and that the removal of Latin from the English language would ruin it; that many phases of modern literature, oratory, sculpture, painting, architecture, ornaments, religion, and morality may be traced to a Roman origin. Rome, moreover, had handed down to later generations not only her own experience, but that of preceding civilizations—those of Egypt, Greece, Asia Minor, and Carthage. Lantern-slides illustrated the talk.

Professor Showerman then talked informally of the wide possibilities for study of ancient and modern Rome at the Summer School of the American Academy, and showed by picture and word Rome and its environs as they are to-day.

In the business meeting of the Club, Dr. E. D. Perry read resolutions in regard to a former President of the Club, Dr. William E. Waters, who died last summer. Dr. McCrea made a report on the Greek Scholarship Fund.

IDA E. WESSA, *Censor*

#### THE CLASSICAL CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA

The 175th meeting of The Classical Club of Philadelphia was held at the Princeton Club on Friday, November 14, 1924. Forty-six members and guests were present. The Chairman of the Prize Committee, Professor Arthur W. Howes, reported the results of the competitive examination in Latin and Greek, given in May. The Boys' Prize was won by Sidney Goodrich, of the Central High School, with honorable mention of Richard R. Weir, of the same School. The Girls' Prize was won by Miss Margaret Morgan, of the Girls' High School. These prizes, of the value of \$20 each, are awarded annually. The competition is open to all members of the February and June graduating classes of all Schools, any members of whose faculties are members of one or both of the two local Classical Associations.

The paper of the evening was given by Professor John C. Rolfe. After a brief account of his experiences in Italy and Greece during the past year, he discussed Seven Great Romans. Alluding to Professor James Harvey Robinson's list of Seven Great Americans, and to the making of such lists as a "popular indoor sport", he drew up a list of seven great Romans, giving his reasons for including each one and for excluding possible rivals. The list given included Fabricius, Augustus, Cicero, Vergil, Lucretius, Ulpian, Augustine.

The Secretary is rather hoping that this may 'start something' in the way of making and justifying other lists by those who may disagree with Professor Rolfe's selections.

B. W. MITCHELL, *Secretary*

#### FALL MEETING OF THE CLASSICAL LEAGUE OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY

The fall meeting of The Classical League of the Lehigh Valley was held at Cedar Crest College, Allentown, Pa., on Saturday, December 3, 1924. Practically all the Preparatory Schools and Colleges of the Valley that are interested in the study of Latin and Greek were represented. The meeting, both in attendance and in the interesting character of its proceedings, was unanimously voted one of the very best in the history of the organization. The President, Dr. George T. Ettinger, Dean of Muhlenberg College, in his opening remarks called attention to the value of the use of ancient coins in teaching the classical languages and literatures, and added to the interest of the meeting

by exhibiting, from his own collection, a large number of Greek and Roman copper and silver coins, some dating back to the days of Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria (176-164 B. C.).

The first paper on the program, The Place of Greek in Secondary Education, read by Mr. J. Warren Fritsch, of the Allentown High School, was a full and able discussion of the various problems that at present confront the study of Greek in the curriculum of the Secondary School.

Professor William A. Lambert, of Lehigh University, read the second paper, which was a keen and at times satirical treatment of The Place of Caesar in Modern Education. He contended that Caesar was not a proper Latin writer to put into the hands of beginners.

Finally, an illustrated lecture, on Changes in Homeric Geography—Ithaca and Pylos, was delivered by Dr. Arthur S. Cooley, of Moravian College, Bethlehem. Dr. Cooley presented many interesting facts concerning discoveries and excavations made by Dr. Wilhelm Dörpfeld, who made the discovery of the real Homeric Troy, and who has done important excavation work at Olympia, Tiryns, Pergamon, and in the islands of Corfu and Leukas. Discussing the geography of the Odyssey, Dr. Cooley gave a fine account of the discoveries Dörpfeld and his assistants made in a series of campaigns between 1903 and 1910. Dr. Dörpfeld, from a study of the Odyssey, and from his observations in the portions of Greece with which it deals, came to the conviction that to satisfy the description of Homer Ithaca must be identified not with the island at present so-called, but with its larger northern neighbor, Leukas.

MARY L. HESS, *Secretary*

#### THE AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME THE SCHOOL OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

A letter, written under date of November 1, 1924, by Professor Tenney Frank, who is this year Professor in Charge of the School of Classical Studies of the American Academy in Rome, addressed to Mr. C. Grant La Farge, Secretary of the American Academy in Rome, contains the very interesting statement that "the government of Rome <is> opening a vigorous campaign of excavations in the Augustan Forum. This dig, undertaken at last according to Corrado Ricci's long published plans, should, at the present rate of work, lay bare the whole floor of the Forum, including the foundations of the Temple of Mars Ultor, before next summer. As is well known, Professor Ricci expects to make important discoveries".

Professor Frank adds the interesting and cheering statement that "nineteen good students <are> taking full work" this year in the School of Classical Studies.

CHARLES KNAPP

#### THE WASHINGTON CLASSICAL CLUB

The Washington Classical Club opened the season of 1924-1925 with a well-attended luncheon at the Cosmos Club, on Saturday, November 8. Colonel Oliver L. Spaulding, Jr., President of the Club, spoke with a soldier's authority on Lessons from Classical Sources Applied in the German War Plans of 1914. He sketched briefly the German war machine, asserted that over and over again the tactics of Hannibal at Cannae were the inspiration of the plans of the German General Staff, and with rare skill as a raconteur set before his audience the events leading up to the battle of Cannae and the battle itself.

M. C. HAWES, *Corresponding Secretary*